**November 9 (Jer 33-37)**

There are entire chunks of text contained in the Hebrew Masoretic (MT) that are entirely lacking in the Greek Septuagint (LXX)

Jer text in the MT but lacking in the LXX: Jer 33:14–26 (“14 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land….”)

**Jehoiakim, 18th King of Judah**

Jehoiakim’s (originally named Eliakim) younger brother Jehoahaz (also known as Shallum) was proclaimed king after Josiah’s death, but was deposed after three months by Pharaoh Necho II and taken to Egypt, where he died. Jehoiakim was put in his place, three months after the Pharaoh had killed Josiah at the Battle of Megiddo. When crowned, his throne name became Jehoiakim. He was a vassal of Egypt who paid heavy taxes, which to raise he taxed the people of Judah (2 Kings 23:35). [In] 605 BC Jehoiakim changed allegiances to avert the destruction of Jerusalem when the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II besieged the city. Jehoiakim rendered tribute and gave some of his royal family and nobles as hostages. In 601 BC he switched allegiances back to Egypt when Babylonian control of the region temporarily weakened. Three years later Nebuchadnezzar again besieged Jerusalem, during which Jehoiakim apparently died. His reign lasted 11 years, until 598 BC, during which he was criticized by the prophets Jeremiah and Uriah ben Shemaiah, whom Jehoiakim ordered to be executed.

**Baruch ben Neriah**

Baruch was the scribe and secretary to Jeremiah during the prophet’s ministry to Judah. When the prophet was banned from entering the Temple, he sent Baruch to read his words there, and later to state officials who may have been supportive of Jeremiah and have been of Baruch’s own social circle. He was the brother of Seraiah ben Neriah, quartermaster of King Zedekiah of Judah. Baruch was so identified with Jeremiah that when the king ordered the arrest of the prophet, he ordered the arrest of the scribe as well.

Scribes of  Israel and Judah were literate in an oral/memory culture. Some of them were priests, others were keepers of records and letter-writers in the royal palaces and administrative centers. The king supported the education of the scribes, as well as being passed down within families. Some scribes also copied documents, in addition to their regular work.

Scribal Rules for Copying the Torah Developed from the Time of the Return from Babylon:

1. They could only use clean animal skins, both to write on, and even to bind manuscripts.
2. Each column of writing could have no less than forty-eight, and no more than sixty lines.
3. The ink must be black, and of a special recipe.
4. They must verbalize each word aloud while they were writing.
5. They must wipe the pen and wash their entire bodies before writing the word “Jehovah,” every time they wrote it.
6. There must be a review within thirty days, and if as many as three pages required corrections, the entire manuscript had to be redone.
7. The letters, words, and paragraphs had to be counted, and the document became invalid if two letters touched each other. The middle paragraph, word and letter must correspond to those of the original document.
8. The documents could be stored only in sacred places (synagogues, etc).
9. As no document containing God’s Word could be destroyed, they were stored, or buried, in a *genizah* – a Hebrew term meaning “hiding place.” These were usually kept in a synagogue or sometimes in a Jewish cemetery. (scottmanning.com)

**Discussion Questions (Jer 33-37)**

1) Another key passage is Jer 33:14-26. How does it reinforce and add to the messianic message of Jer 31:31-34?

2) In Jer 35, what is the shaping characteristic of the nomadic Rechabites who are within the protection of Jerusalem? Why would God have Jeremiah call attention to these nomads? And why in the chambers of Hanan, probably a prophet from the expressions referring to him, in the Temple?

3) How is Jeremiah in Jer 36 treated? What does it say about the spiritual state of King Jehoiakim, his court and the Temple officials? Are there any exceptions?

4) Why would King Hezekiah in Jer 37 after putting the prophet in prison ask him for any word from God? And then, after God’s message which said the king would be given into the hands of the king of Babylon (v. 17), why would Hezekiah improve Jeremiah’s conditions in captivity?

5) How can you personally apply these verses?

6) Make up your own question and answer it.